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SUBJECT: SRI LANKA: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON NEW UN  
PERMREP PRASAD KARIYAWASAM

1. (SBU) Prasad Kariyawasam, who has been appointed as Sri Lanka's new Permanent Representative to the UN, has been a valued Embassy contact whose professionalism, good judgment and familiarity with the U.S. have helped advance our bilateral economic agenda on a number of key fronts over the past eighteen months. A career diplomat, in his current post as Director General for Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kariyawasam has proven a knowledgeable, helpful interlocutor on a broad range of subjects, from UNGA-related economic issues to free trade to Sri Lanka's Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) eligibility. His experience as the DCM at the Sri Lankan Embassy in Washington gives him excellent insight into US policy objectives and initiatives. His appreciation of the the "bigger picture" issues related to US-Sri Lankan relations has been especially beneficial during our recent bilateral MCA discussions. For example, despite his personal reservations about certain MCA requirements, he nonetheless recognized the importance of securing a compact to our overall relations, contributing to the process by pushing a draft proposal through the labyrinthine Sri Lankan bureaucracy and advocating for an improved consultative process.

2. (SBU) A member of the Sri Lankan Foreign Service since 1981, Kariyawasam has held diplomatic posts in Geneva, Riyadh, Washington and New Delhi. Before his current posting as Director General for Economic Affairs, he served as the Ambassador and PermRep to the UN in Geneva. He was elected as a Vice-Chairperson at the 59th Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, as well as Vice-Chair of the main committee at the World Conference against Racism in Durban in 2001. In addition, he was elected Chair of the 2004 sessions of the Chairpersons of the Human Rights Treaty Bodies and Inter-Committee Meetings and was President of the Council of the International Organization for Migration from 2001-2002. Kariyawasam also led the Sri Lankan delegation to the UN Conference on Disarmament from 2001 to 2003 and served as a delegate to the UN Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism during the same time.

3. (SBU) Born on March 21, 1954 in the southern district of Galle, Kariyawasam is a member of the majority Sinhalese Buddhist community in Sri Lanka. He played cricket for Royal College, one of Sri Lanka's leading secondary schools, before graduating from Peradeniya University in Sri Lanka with a B.S. He is married with two children. His wife Kanthi is a researcher at Georgetown University Medical School, and his daughter graduated in December from the University of Maryland with a degree in computer science.

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